

Black Eyed Peas - A Southern New Year's Tradition from *Urban Sacred Garden*



Black Eyed Peas on New Year's Day is one of my most favorite Southern traditions. It is believed that eating Black Eyed Peas and Collard Greens in the New Year will bring you luck and prosperity. Anytime I can prepare a dish for friends with special meaning it is like a gift to me. I also love the texture, taste and flavor of Black Eyed Peas, which makes it all the better. If you end up with extra, add them to a soup with a little broth, greens and pork of choice (I'll be making my soup later this week with diced pork roast and country ham leftover from Christmas that I saved in the freezer).

INGREDIENTS

1 Lb. Dried Black Eyed Peas, rinsed and bad bits removed (or 30 oz. re-hydrated from the Produce section, still rinsed)
4 Bay Leaves
Fresh Ground Sea Salt
2 Tbsp Olive Oil
1/3 Lb Thick Cut Bacon, coarsely chopped

1/4 Yellow Onion, finely chopped
1 Jalapeno Pepper, diced
1 Serrano Pepper, diced
3 Tbsp Bourbon
4 Tbsp Worcestershire
Fresh Ground Black Pepper

DIRECTIONS

1. Place Black Eyed Peas in a large dutch oven or soup pan. Cover with water (if using dry beans allow to soak covered overnight, or at least 8 hours, but change out water for fresh before cooking). Cook Black Eyed Peas over medium low heat at a simmer in fresh water with Bay Leaf and Sea Salt (to taste). If using re-hydrated Black Eyed Peas, cook for about 20 minutes, if using dry beans cook for up to two hours or as needed for correct texture. Do not overcook, or Black Eyed Peas will be too mushy.
2. When Black Eyed Peas are finished cooking, pour into a colander to drain off excess water. Leave Black Eyed Peas in colander for now and set aside.
3. Rinse out the same large dutch oven you used to cook the beans. Place back on the stovetop and add Bacon and Olive Oil. Cook for a few minutes. Add Onion, Jalapeno and Serrano. Allow everything to cook for about 5 minutes, stirring occasionally, until bacon begins to get crispy. Add Bourbon to deglaze pot and scrape all the tasty bits off the bottom of the pan (use a wooden utensil to prevent scratching your pans). Allow to cook for about 2 more minutes.
4. Remove pan from heat. Add Beans back into the pot. Add Worcestershire. Stir thoroughly. Cover with a lid and allow to rest while flavors steam together. After about 15-20 minutes remove the lid and add more Salt, Black Pepper and Worcestershire to taste.
5. Remove Bay Leaves before serving. Serve warm. Enjoy!